

Farr, the most senior Californian on the House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, negotiated these funds in the Fiscal Y07 Agriculture Appropriations Bill which passed the House Appropriations Committee this evening. The bill will now go to the House Floor for a vote.

"No one produces better agriculture on better land anywhere else in the world. The valleys of the Central Coast produce over \$3.5 billion worth of fresh fruits, vegetables and horticulture every year. We're a hot spot for innovation - from research on the latest pests, to organic practices, to the latest packaging," said Farr. "Every year I am proud to use my position on the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee to ensure that our local agriculture industry will continue to flourish far into the future."

#### **Highlights of Rep. Farr's provisions in the FY07 Agriculture Appropriations Bill:**

##### **Salinas Agriculture Research Center, Building Construction and Planning: \$6 million**

Replacing the current World War II-era dilapidated structures at the Salinas Agricultural Research Service station, many of which are obsolete and fail to meet building codes, has been an ongoing priority for Rep. Farr. This year's funds will be sufficient to complete a new 31,600 sq.ft. lab and continue planning/construction of the remaining buildings.

The Salinas research laboratory conducts research directed at sustainable production systems, management practices, and organic farming practices that maintain agriculture productivity while preserving the sensitive marine ecosystem in Monterey Bay.

##### **Specialty Crop Competitiveness Block Grant Program: \$15.6 million**

Rep. Farr negotiated \$15.6 million for Specialty Crop Block Grants program this year, more than double the allocation of \$7 million that Congress provided to start up the program in FY2006. As a major fruit and vegetable producer, California stands to benefit significantly from this national program designed to support initiatives that help fruit and vegetable producers meet the challenges of competing in tough global markets.

##### **Organics: more than \$5 million**

Rep. Farr, a strong Congressional advocate for organics standards, worked to maintain the viability of the USDA's Organics Program despite a tough budgetary situation. In this year's bill he pushed for funding to support organic crop research, some of which happens at the Salinas ARS station, as well as:

Organic Data Surveys: \$500,000

Supports the collection of data about the organic industry in an effort to provide this industry with the same statistical tools available to the traditional agriculture sector.

Organic Transitions Program: \$1.885 million

A research grant program that focuses on helping farmers surmount some of the challenges of organic production and marketing.

Organic Standards: \$3.13 million

The national organic standards, which have been in effect since October 31, 2002, provide a uniform national standard for the term "organic" that ensures consumer confidence in American organic products. The rules, however, need to be properly enforced in order to protect both consumers and producers. This funding will be used for complaint investigations, on-site auditing of certifiers, and certifier training programs.

### **Grapes/Viticulture: more than \$35 million**

The Central Coast and California are the home to the premier American vineyards. This year, Rep. Farr continued his ongoing support for the local wine and grape industry by securing funds for research into growing practices and pest management.

Viticulture Research: more than \$11 million, including \$6 million dedicated to research on the vine-killing Pierce's Disease carried by the glassy-winged sharpshooter that threatens the grape and wine industry.

Control/Contain Pests: \$24.33 million, the bulk of this (\$24.18 million) to track and prevent the spread of glassy-winged sharpshooters and Pierce's Disease. No less than \$150,000 will go to preventing the spread of the vine mealy bug.

National Grape and Wine Initiative: \$250,000 This is a new strategic research plan developed in collaboration with state and federal researchers and extension personnel to enhance the grape industry's competitiveness and contribution to the economy.

### **Additional Specialty Crops funds**

In addition to funds for the Competitiveness Block Grant program, Rep. Farr secured funds for research focused on lettuce germplasm and pests, and other fruits and vegetables. Of specific interest to Central Coast growers are funds to help strawberry growers phase out use of methyl bromide as a pesticide:

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service: \$3.075 million for Methyl Bromide Transition Program focused on integrating research efforts to aid farmers in transitioning from the use of the chemical methyl bromide. Congress appropriated \$2.5 million for the program last year.